

Wayne Bennett

Leskernick Diary 1997

Introduction: This diary was written-up in December 97/January 98 several months after the third season (my second) on the Leskernick hillside. The original script was written always very late at night - the very last thing to do. No matter how tired or drunk I was it was the final act before lights out. Sometimes the handwriting became very flamboyant and subsequently difficult to read. Writing it late at night meant that the whole day had to be recalled. I think this is why certain structural events feature prominently - the journey into Camelford; who travels in the car; the cooking of food. These events become the framework for the day remembered onto which the more reflective ideas are placed. The process of writing up the original script brought forward all sorts of additional memories and thoughts to those actually noted. In this way the diary is double-layered. The first remembering at the end of each day and a second remembering in the writing up many months later. In this way the diary which follows has become a more vivid fiction - a fragmentary personal account.

Day One : Saturday 7 June

It was a real slog trying to get up, into gear and organised. Although the next three weeks is work it is also three weeks away from work. A holiday which isn't. The important thing seemed to be not to forget anything which would make the next three weeks a pain. Loaded the car, and despite not camping this year, I still managed to fill it to capacity! Ludicrous really. I have brought my Dorset long barrows research stuff including a whole load of books which I feel I must have to hand...just in case!

I first went to Dillington for 11.30am to do the lighting for the concert this evening. The Leopold String Trio arrived shortly afterwards having performed in Wells Cathedral on Friday night. They are very sweet and friendly - as well as great musicians - and so I am disappointed to not to be able to stay for the concert. I got them sorted and had lunch. Richard (Dillington's Assistant General Manager) arrived during lunch to take over from me. He was quite nervous and appeared anxious. Classical music isn't his scene and so I suppose he felt on alien territory. Left Dillington at 3.40pm and went to Sainsbury's in Taunton for cash, supplies and petrol. Then down to Camelford via the M5 - A30. It was good to be travelling west into the light and three weeks of inspirational work. Arrived at Juliot's Well Holiday Park about 6.10pm. The reception was closed and everything seemed very quiet. Wandered around a bit but no familiar faces or signs of life. After the slog of getting down it was a bit disconcerting to find nobody around. A re-run of last year I thought. I decided to sit this one out and see what happens. Parked the car in the lower car park and waited. After about ten minutes I saw Penni going for a walk so I jumped out to say hello. She recognised me (sort of) but said I looked different - two stone less in fact. I had been on a strict health diet for five months which I knew couldn't realistically be maintained during the three weeks. I hadn't been eating any foods made with fermented products including yeasts. Bread, cheese, wine, cheese, vinegar etc.. had been out.

Penni was sharing with a caravan with Barbara - which I was too - so I unloaded everything into a tiny room in No44. It was all very swish and comfortable...and light years for the tent. This was going to be completely different from last year I thought. Barbara, Chris and Christel arrived. It was really great to see everyone again. Unpacked and settled in we all had supper was in the formica'd greasy spoon which proports to be the campsite restaurant. Deep fried chicken and chips. Chris and Christel were welcome to most of my chips.

After supper we went to the bar where Sue held court in an admirable way. She introduced everyone which was excellent - something which didn't happen last year. It wasn't long before the familiarisation meeting had to compete with the pulsing beat of disco. There we were in conference, being serious and trying to hear what was being said, whilst the rest of the bar sat around trying to look as if they were enjoying themselves! The other residents in the bar were I'm sure both mystified and amused at what we were trying to do. John (the owner) and the Australian lad - who had grown his hair very long - both came over and were very friendly and welcoming. Sue spoke about how things were to be organised. Later Chris quipped on how she had taken the lead but I thought it was absolutely right for her to assert how she and her team were going to work. The advance team of diggers had already been on site for sometime. Sue described our respective roles - one of mine was as a first aider. I talked about the danger of adders since I had seen a news article on the television warning of the dangers on the moors this summer. I think everyone thought I was exaggerating. Sue's assertiveness and Chris' reaction was already pointing to differences in approach. One highly organised and focused, the other more intuitive and easy going. Barbara probably oscillates (negotiates?) a course between the two recognising that both approaches have their place in circumstances like Leskernick.

Had some booze - the first since January - and felt fine. I thought I might be under the table in minutes. Not so. Talked to Chris and Barbara about drawing on site. Back to the caravan and had coffee with Barbara. We talked (I hope quietly) about this and that. Penni had already gone to bed. The caravan is so completely different to the hassle of camping. Light out at 1.00am.

Day Two : Sunday 8 June: Up at 7.30am. Yoghurt for breakfast. Made lunch in the caravan. Now having to eat bread and cheese for the first time although after the booze last night the abandonment of my strict regime didn't seem too much of a disappointment.

Drove BB (Barbara) to Westmoorgate. We talked about Tim Darvill (my Supervisor at Bournemouth) and how some in archaeology think of him with suspicion. I suppose I sort of put the case for him arguing that it takes all sorts and that circumstances at Bournemouth are very different to the sacred halls of UCL.

Arrived on site for an introductory tour by Sue, Barbara and Chris. Very good and interesting to hear how their story was developing. It pissed down - horrendously - and we all got completely soaked. BB didn't cover her head and ended up looking like a drowned rat. I didn't say anything but she looked very funny! In getting wet Christel became very cold so I gallantly lent her my fleece. House 28 is the food and refreshment place. A circular place central to the site. The communal coffee was horrendous so have decided to bring a flask on Gold Blend Continental tomorrow. I didn't do any drawing before lunch and immediately afterwards we talked through the sociology project with Mike and Tony. What it was about and how they were going to work. No problems with me and an interesting dimension of the project I thought. After tea CT (Chris) and I set about drawing a house but couldn't really get going. The pencil was so very hard. Stupid really but I didn't fully realise that my drawing style is intimately connected to the quality of the tools and materials I am using. The use of two one-metre drawing frames speeds up things no end. CT is very proud of his woodworking skills. They seem to represent his concession to the empiricist tradition. Back to the campsite with BB and Dan - wearing a pair of very trendy purple military fatigues and a very expensive climbing jacket to match! Cooked supper. Chops, cauliflower, carrots, courgettes with garlic. Melon and cheese for afters. Chris came over with Henry and Christel and we all talked until 10.00pm. Very good to see Henry again. Up

until 12.30am. I must go to bed earlier. The intense mental stimulation, exercise and fresh air is exhausting.

Day Three : Monday 9 June

Up at 7.30am for an 8.30 departure. Got lunch from the "student caravan". I thought I would try out the communal arrangement. We pay a subscription each week and then help ourselves to what we want out of the "student caravan". Although I did my lunch today the scene of disorganisation and lack of hygiene immediately made me decide that from now on I will do my own lunch. would have to speak to Fay and ask for a refund. Off in the car with Henry, CT and Christel. Called in at Camelford so that CT could get a pasty and Christel a sandwich. Arrived at Westmoorgate in the drizzle. Found BB waiting patiently in her car wondering if anyone else would turn up! It was very misty on the moor and we were in danger of getting completely disorientated and lost.

Onto the moor we took the brown flysheet and poles from my old tent. It was made from very strong canvas and really too good to throw away when the inner tent fell apart. Because of its generous size I thought this would make a good shelter and we could get lots of people inside. I had loaded it into the car "just in case" and the experience of yesterday's downpour suggested that taking it onto the hillside might be good idea. After a ludicrous few minutes of "negotiation" about what was the best position CT asserted that it should be erected just west of the "Shrine Stone" and House 28. We put it up and with a groundsheet I was surprised at how spacious it was. CT and I drew two houses with cairns. Again I found working with two drawing frames made the work much quicker. Last year the two drawing teams had one each and this made everything a bit laborious.

At lunchtime I telephoned Richard at Dillington using the Dillington mobile phone which I had brought along. I said to him that because of the nature of my work I would only be available between 1.00-2.00pm. BB seemed a bit horrified that I should want to have a mobile phone with me as apparently I had been said something last year about not having such things on site. I can't remember but it sounds like the sort of thing I would say.

The weather brightened up considerably during the day which was great. The turf dried out quite quickly. At some point during lunch I mentioned to Helen that the special shaped stones were cultural and were recognised in the past as such and that's why they were used. Her reaction was a bit odd - really not welcoming the suggestion. I shut up quickly. CT, Henry and I went up to the cairn which Helen and Gary had been excavating. It was all very complicated. Helen and Gary came down to look at what we had interpreted as two House-Cairn conversions. Helen commented about how they were not like their cairn. The implication was that our interpretation was a bit wayward. CT and I went up to House 29 and set up for tomorrow.

BB was in the caravan when I got back - reading The Guardian. She had left the hillside early to do some college reading and marking. On the way back to Westmoorgate BB and Tony had got lost and ended up deep in a bog. Obviously frazzled by the ordeal she abandoned any thoughts of doing the college work and was recovering in a semi-recumbent posture. I cooked tomato soup followed by ham and eggs for BB and moi. We decided that we would have a quiet evening but this plan was thwarted by visitors - first Henry, then Mike Wilmore (who gave me a questionnaire to complete), then Tony and then Sue. Penni, BB and most of the visitors smoked throughout the evening and so I was glad to get back into the cool air of my room at midnight. I am not used to the smoke and the air did become very blue. It seems unusual that so many people on the project smoke.

This is only day three and I am finding the social dimension of the project all very exhausting. Tomorrow I will try to take more rest and try to find some quiet. My plan is to go to bed when I get back and get an hour or so and try to catch up. Very important I think.

Day Four : Tuesday 10 June

Getting up this morning was hell. Really difficult. Eventually I stirred and made for the social environment of the lounge. Penni had already left - eager beaver. BB was pottering. Cereal for breakfast. The weather forecast was not good with thunderstorms predicted. I drove following BB to Bray Down/Bowthick to make a northern approach to the site. I suppose I was a bit concerned that with storms forecast the stream across which we took the cars would rise to a swollen torrent during the day leaving us stuck. Christel claimed she was a little hung-over after drinking a little. Later discovered that she, CT and Henry had downed two bottles and half a wine box! The walk to the site was rather long and exhausting. Met up with Mike Wilmore and gave him back the questionnaire duly completed. Mentioned to him that his question about marital status made certain assumptions - none of which applied to me! Also had a bit of a chat about being a student on London's external programme. Very interesting and something to follow up. Drew House 22 which is a bit complicated. CT and I think that the house has been deliberately decommissioned - deconstructed. The large stones arranged on top of a pile of smaller stones to create a possible cairn within a house. Echoes of Bradley (Journal of Material Culture Vol.1 No.2) ref. the transformation of Neolithic long houses into long barrows perhaps?

Lunchtime. Dutifully turned on the mobile phone but no calls - thank goodness. Very sleepy and begin to feel that the abandonment of my diet has been a big mistake. Slept for 20 minutes. When I woke it was lightly raining. Warm rain. Went up to House 21 and started there. The rain and wind became a real hindrance to drawing and eventually made things impossible. I abandoned the task and went back to the tent to find CT, BB and Christel all snuggled up in its shelter. I joined them. Later joined by Tony who is a very nice person. He always seems to have a twinkle in his eye. The afternoon was rained off and so we returned to the cars. Christel had somehow torn a pair of waterproof trousers which Penni had lent her and therefore had very wet legs. Returned to the campsite with CT, Henry and Cristel.

We all went to Bodmin in CT's car to do something with films for Christel. She also wanted to try and get a new pair of waterproof trousers to replace those she had torn. Bodmin was grim. Wet, almost deserted and closing. Then to Safeways. Inside the shop we all wandered around like the Stepford Wives - tired, completely dazed at the riches before our eyes and totally unable to comprehend what it all meant. It was as if our world on Leskernick had a reality unconnected with that which we were experiencing in the aisles. An experience completely alien to that of the hillside. Two world's apart.

Back at the campsite BB and Penni had gone for a meal in the greasy spoon. I cooked steak, onions, garlic and courgettes with basil. Plus a bottle of red wine which went down very nicely indeed. Listened to a recital on the radio of Bach partitas. Bliss. 8.50pm BB & Penni returned and we watched the news on Television. The weather forecast was again not very good. Then a programme on the British class system. Sue called in for a chat. She is really grappling with trying to understand the social dynamic of the community - trying to work out what is going on. What was the point I thought. Go with the flow. I suppose she feels that she has a responsibility to ensure that everything is hunky-dory. 11.00pm had a wonderful Badedas (bought in Safeways) shower after which I retired to my pit for a good night's sleep.

Day Five : Wednesday 11 June

Again I woke up feeling shattered. Because my bed is so narrow I have to sleep on my back. I asked BB if I snored. She said I did but rhythmically which I presume means that I was breathing normally! I waxed my boots in the futile attempt to make them waterproof. Wellies are the only sure bet in saturated conditions on the Moor.

I had a chat with the workman repairing the toilets on site about whether he could get me piece of plastic pipe. I thought we could use this to make a filling-up point at the Leskernick spring. Drinking from the source which probably supplied the community which once lived on the hillside had its attraction. Getting connected in a physical way perhaps? Left in the car with Mike Wilmore and Henry. Played the "People's Century" tape. Arrived at Westmoorgate in the mist and drizzle. Our feet got absolutely sodden. We led the group out and got rather disorientated...even lost for a while. Almost ended up in BB's swamp it seemed. The empiricist (!) CT was quite certain where we had gone wrong which was rather disconcerting and amusing at the same time. BB made some aside about the men doing the leading...true to form or something like that. We were so disorientated that on the hillside and even had to back track our way to the tent. I suppose it didn't help to find that the landmark of the tent had in fact blown down. Remembering BB's comment about "men doing the leading" I suggested that we play a game on her and not set about the "manly task" of putting up the tent to see what happens. After a period of sitting around recovering from the walk BB suggested that we (us) put the tent up. The men put the tent up although realising the joke BB joined in the labour!

The mist and drizzle soon lifted and I went up the hill to draw. Today we had the task of plotting our movements on the hillside which I dutifully did. At lunchtime I cracked some comment about all the bloody form filling which Tony took quite seriously until he saw my map and realised that it was a wind-up. During the afternoon I got very tired and depressed working by myself. Everything seemed to need a lot of effort. At the end of the day around 5.00pm the mist came down again and CT came over to see what I'd been up to. Two houses drawn today. We briefly talked about how I was feeling and we agreed that tomorrow I would draw "artistically" tomorrow in the hope that this would be therapeutic.

Mike Wilmore and I drove back to the campsite. The workman had left a piece of plastic pipe which was great. Penni had bought some chicken, potatoes and frozen peas which was great. I cooked. The three of us had a nice meal and two bottles of wine. At dinner BB and I chatted about Hodder - his chameleon ways - and about the changing character of archaeological theory. Later BB went to see Helen in her caravan. Penni and I talked about loads of things including an extraordinary conversation about ageing. She is well into her sixties but genuinely doesn't look or act it! I think she thinks that her fags help keep off the weight and because she feels good about her figure she feels good about herself. Well, it works for her. On her return BB insisted on doing the washing up which was fine by me. In bed by midnight.

Day Six : Thursday 12 June

Again the weather was lousy. Drove Tony and Henry to Camelford. I bought a pair of 20 denier tights to the spring pipe...I've never done that before nor indeed looked at women's tights so closely. Arrived late on site to be met by Peter Herring. We took Peter on a tour of the site. CT joined us (He and Christel had been back to Bodmin to collect the photos). CT talked about the decommissioning of the houses. After lunch I was interviewed by Tony which was very interesting. Then down to the clitter flow to draw the rocks and attempt to see what might appear to be culturally placed or altered in some way. Completed four not very good drawings. I was working on too small a scale and felt a little uncomfortable about interpreting the rocks in an illustrative way. Went over to the spring to fix up the water pipe

using the tights. Mike (the excavator) was quite surprised when I asked to borrow a shovel. I think for a moment he thought I was going to give him a hand in the trench! After fixing up the pipe (not very successfully - not enough drop in level and too much muck in suspension) I leave the site giving BB a hand with the white tarpaulin which she needs to take to London for Jan's mother's birthday party. Via the co-op to the campsite for a quiet evening watching TV including "Eastenders" and "This Life". Drank quite a bit of wine - again. Penni returned from having dinner with an old boyfriend. After a chat about how it all we went we both went off to our respective pits.

Day Seven : Friday 13 June

A day off - well sort of. BB & CT are in London and the excavators are also having a day off. I decided to spend the day mooching about and sorting through my papers. Penni went off with Henry and Christel to Bodmin to the museum and then to Tony Blackman's place which they enjoyed immensely despite even more rain. It was good to be on my own. Looking back on the day I didn't do very much which is really good. Even had a two hour siesta after lunch - what luxury. At 5.30pm went to the co-op to stock up on supplies. Penni et al returned about 6.00pm and I cooked for all - mince, garlic, tomatoes with mashed potatoes, steamed white cabbage and carrots. Delicious. Tony called in during dinner with caravan site plans for us to track our movements on. I pointed out that I didn't move much around the site because I didn't know where everyone was and that I was reluctant to impose myself on other's space without good reason (such as an invitation) to do so. A bit of a pointless exercise in my case but that's not for me to judge. After dinner Henry and I went to the bar and had a couple of drinks. As a non-working day my energy levels - which haven't been high in any case - slumped to an all-time low. It was reassuring to hear others say something similar - including Sue.

The geologists arrived - very young and energetic. They talked non-stop about their work. They were camping - poor things. Chatted to Steve and Dan who both let their hair down literally. Steve's hair was extraordinary long and Dan looked quite handsome with his Hollywood hair! Henry and I talked about going to TAG in Bournemouth. He said that he would like to stay at Toller Whelme. I said it would be great to have him stay and we could drive in each day but that he couldn't smoke in the house. In the garden way okay.

Day Eight : Saturday 14 June

What a beautiful day. Cool air and blue skies. Bought The Times and Guardian. Henry, Christel and I travelled to Westmoorgate. CT hadn't arrived by the time we got on site so I set about doing House 14. After lunch CT gave a hand in helping me draw the elevation. After that I did House 12 which was a bit of a challenge but very rewarding. It had some unusual stones - pieces streaked with quartz and the fine grained granite called "elvin stone". The weather was so beautiful that it was a joy to be on the hillside. It was really good to be working in such a beautiful place and my spirit was not depressed by the isolation of working for much of the time on my own. Met up with Peter Herring on site. He is so full on enthusiasm and seems to have a genuinely appreciative of our in depth investigations.

At 5.15pm Ed and Stefan - the geologists from Coventry came around the hillside pawing over stones like men possessed! I asked them what were they looking for. It was quartz as the feldspar in the granite was not good in giving them the response they required. I told them about the quartz in House 12 which they then tackled with something called a Schmidt hammer - a hand held tool which like a gun fired a percussion blow onto the rock surface. The power of the rebound was measured and subsequently calculated or calibrated to indicate whether a rock had been moved into its present position in prehistoric or more

recent times. Seemingly simple and very clever I thought. Both of them were incredibly enthusiastic and energetic and totally absorbed in what they were doing.

With the skies slowly clouding over we (CT, Henry, Mike Wilmore and I) set off from the Moor to the cars tired and inspired after such a good day. There wasn't much conversation.

Mike came in my car as the others wanted a good smoke on the drive back! We listened to "Sacred Spirit" with only the occasional comment.

Back at camp Penni had bought in some supplies including a wine box. I cooked chicken wings with garlic, onions and celery plus potatoes and broccoli. Tony called in just in time for some supper. At 10pm (the light goes late in Cornwall) we went to the bar and joined in the social atmosphere. Talked to Gary and also to Helen who I think is suspicious of the fact that I am not really interested in excavating. Chatted to SH, CT and the geologists who are really fired up at what they are doing - totally. Stefan is extraordinary - he twitches then explodes with a statement. Henry and I in our drunken largess agreed to do breakfast in the morning. On getting back to the caravan BB had returned from London. Padded about quietly and did the diary. What a great day.

Day Nine : Sunday 15 June

Up at 7am. Another beautiful day. 8am at caravan 12 to cook breakfast although it wasn't until 8.10am that caravan 12 stirred into action. Henry and CT have a hangover I think. Ed and Stefan were there as was Christel, Tony and BB. After breakfast it was into Camelford (10am) then to Leskernick (11am)...a bit of a late start really. I hadn't long since started when Tony came over and asked me to take a photo. Totally intuitively I did a close-up of a tent peg with its piece of red and white plastic tape attached. I was attracted to the contrasts between the red and green, the metal and the rock, the flimsiness of the plastic tape and the of solidness of the rock, an intimate landscape within the vast landscape of the Moor ... encultured by my activity rather than by others. It was like taking a photograph of my ephemeral presence.

Lunch at 1pm. Heard from the geologists that the "elven" granite had cooled quickly into columnar forms (like basalt) whereas the lumpy granite with the large crystalline structure had cooled down much more slowly.

In the afternoon we went around with Ed and Stefan and they confirmed our suspicions that many of the stones in the clutter streams had been moved - reorganised. Brilliant! If this is the case then the implications about how we read the landscape could be radically transformed. The reason for living among the rocks could be to do with their properties, their symbolic and metaphoric meaning. The rocks could be the embodiment of the communities spiritual life. Wow! Afterwards I we went across and completed House 8. All the houses in the western compound have now been done. Visited the other areas of working and then to CT and BB who were doing things elsewhere in the Western Settlement. We cling-filmed some stones and painted them red. I discovered a beautiful long thin stone lying on its side I lifted it up to show the others. On lowering it fell out of my hands and I discovered how brittle granite can be. It broke. It was an awful moment. Something which may have laid in the landscape for centuries or millennia - perfectly formed was now suddenly broken. Perhaps the whole hillside was littered with the remains of such acts - accidental or otherwise. This thought doesn't make it any easier to accept my stupidity.

The evening ended with drinks in House 28. CT & BB had also brought pasties and pies. Unfortunately Penni, Dan, Steve and Eric all missed out through a misunderstanding of what

it was meant to be about. Jeremy Butler appeared over the hill to take photos of the houses using his camera on a fishing rod method. We compared techniques over a glass of wine which was nice. He's going to do some plans using his technique. I'll have mine and we will also have those done by the technical excavation - Houses 39 & 23. It should be good to compare and contrast. Back at camp I cooked pasta and cheese for moi, BB and Henry. Penni returned much later and had already eaten. CT and Christel finally turned up. CT had been looking for evidence for rock carvings in the dark using a torch. Nothing found. We finished off the wine box and had a well-oiled discussion about the possibility of having a discussion in one of the houses at lunchtime about various issues. Bed and diary at 1pm.

Day Ten : Monday 16 June

Getting up was a little fraught. Too much wine and too little sleep. A leaden body and no enthusiasm for calling up any reserves of energy. Had a wonderful shower lathering courtesy of badeas shower gel. Pure bliss. BB seemed anxious that my departure for the hill was a little lax! I suspect that there was some thoughts that yesterday's very late start might have set up a precedent. I replied gently that we were going to leave at 8.45am as agreed.

CT did the driving. Called in at the pasty shop. The walk was really nice and in the end we were only about 5-10 mins behind BB. Arrived at House 39 to met by Tony Blackman in a blue track suit and trainers. Henry took him off on a "Broughton Tour". Lucky Henry! I went off to the tent for my coffee and half a cheese and onion pasty. CT joined. Then off with BB to do a section of wall beyond the Western Compound. Very interesting. Double skinned and rubble filled. Very substantial. CT went to look at the clitter spread to the WNW of the Western Settlement. He came back very excited about the rearrangement of the stones within the clitter mass. Peter Herring and Kathy (?) Herring did some drawing of the walls. After lunch we go off to see a newly identified House above the cairn which Gary and Helen had been excavating. Tony Blackman had spotted this and it wasn't on any of the plans. One could see why as compared to the others on the hillside it was isolated and more of a platform defined by a few very low stones. Not a complete circle even. I notice an alignment of upright stones running from the "House" directly to the Quoit. Tony Blackman was quite put out saying "how come I didn't notice that?". His reaction is indicative of how he feels about the Moor. He means well but is a bit authoritarian about things - all those years standing up in front of a classroom of children have made its mark on the man. Afterwards I help CT wrap stones in cling film below the connecting area between the two settlements. We paint them white. It tries to rain pathetically. We finally leave the hill to the animals, the stones and the weather. At Westmoorgate CT manages to lock his keys in his car. I feel really sorry for him as he's very tired and he and we could do without the hassle of it all. I borrow a coat hanger from the neighbouring house but fail to open the lock. CT finally decides to break the rear window. The stone first bounces off the glass and then finally gives. We photograph the deed as it happens.

Back at camp I cook Spaghetti Bolognese. We watch the news especially for the weather forecast and then we organise the jobs and the shopping for the party tomorrow night. BB and I read the paper and then to our beds.

Day Eleven : Tuesday 17 June

What a day! Tony, CT, Christel and Renata (Christel's German friend) have the day off. I set off this morning to the rousing sounds of Mahler's Das Leid von Der Erde. Stopped off at Camelford to get pasties and a Guardian. Then to Westmoorgate. I draw House 7. The weather is very close - humid. The sun eventually bursts out at lunch time. After lunch Henry met up with a woman from the North Cornwall Archaeological Society and her two white dogs who were very spirited. At House 7 I thought long and hard about the drawing

methodology. Although in this diary the houses are "houses" we have only recently started consistently calling them houses as such - although it has to be said that CT has consistently called them houses. Previously we might have called them huts. That is, implying something primitive and crude which they are certainly not. It was where people lived. Spaces in which people and their personalities lived. At lunch time I tried to get some sleep but Henry woke me up not realising how knackered I was. Afterwards Henry and I finished off House 8 by doing the internal elevation. We then went across to Codda and saw the amazing sight of our white stones (painted cling film) from the hillside opposite. Tony was going to join us but couldn't seem to get himself together for the walk! Actually I think he was busy writing up his notes. Over at Codda in the clutter-flow Henry and I identified a big block of stone surrounded by other stones which had seemed to have been arranged around it. Now we are looking for these arrangements they seem to be everywhere! Henry and I returned to the car and back to Camelford and the party which we were to have to say goodbye to Penni. Cooked potatoes, cheese and onions, green beans and a curry sauce. The food and company was great in all respects. Fay and I talked about music and her interest in the cello. BB and I (me a bit pissed) finally did the washing up 1am.

Day Twelve : Wednesday 18 June

Up with a hangover. Not too bad but again very tired. Next year I am determined to organise my time differently and get masses of sleep. We shall see. BB was going off to Camarthen and Penni off home. Lots of farewells and arrangements for the keys to be made. Off to site in CT's car with Christel and Tony. Stopped off a Camelford for the usual pasties and Guardian. The newsagents seems to only get a couple so it is important to call in the morning and not on the way home. CT drives very fast. Surviving hangover - just. Dave Hooley from English Heritage joins us. Recover in House 28 and have coffee. I go off to draw House 6. Progress is slow and I finish shortly after lunch. In the afternoon help CT and Tony do the walls in the Western Settlement. Twice it rains heavily and we have to stop. We are soaked. Thank goodness for the shelter of the tent. The diggers work on stoically. When we are working we notice lots of new walls in the compound - very fragmentary and sometimes vague. Maybe they are not walls but delimiters of space. Most of them connect up the larger stones. We walk back to Westmoorgate early and very wet. Before leaving the hillside Tony explains to us very excitedly about how Brown Gelly comes into view as you approach the stone row terminal. It is all very subtle and I wonder whether these visual references concern the initial siting of the terminal or are suggestive of ways in which the wider landscape may have been referenced on a everyday basis.

Back to the car and off to Camelford. I arrange to see CT to discuss the possibility of doing something at UCL. Get chicken for supper. Arrive back at the caravan and decide to move into Penni's room which is bigger than mine. Excellent move. Shower. Cook. CT to dinner and we have a good chat about the various possibilities. He gets quite interested which is promising! I make some notes. Bed at 11pm - which seems terribly early.

Day Thirteen : Thursday 19 June

Woke up to heavy rain beating on the caravan roof. There seemed no chance that we could work on the Moor in this weather. Refined the storage in bedroom. Did the washing up from last night. I had a message from Richard at work to ring Dillington but alas there was no signal at the camp site. Did some washing in the shower which is a very good place to do clothes. Soaked socks and knickers. The shirts will have to wait. Went off to Camelford and called Richard from a call box. Only stuff concerning George Melly. Did the shopping - Guardian and supplies. Returned at 11.30am. A productive and industrious morning. Had a sleep and then lunch and then a sleep again. Woke up at 4.30pm after some fantastic dreams. Hung out the clothes to dry. Cleared the decks for CT who said he would cook

tonight...a Thai surprise. The afternoon has turned out really quite nice with bright sunshine and a fresh breeze...great from drying socks and knickers. Heard on the radio that William Hague has won the Tory leadership campaign. The Tories are in complete disarray after their drubbing at polls. Electing Hague is another death wish. Long may they remain out of office.

CT, Renata, Christel and Henry arrive back to site a little later than planned. Dave Hooley calls in to report that he's been to the doctor with his bad knee and has been signed off work for two weeks. He tells us of the work he has done on the Leskernick fields (marking up lynchets) and says that he will do some more in September. CT's meal is delicious. I telephoned Gill who is coming down on Sunday for two days or so. I say to her that she can stay in the spare room in our caravan. We had a long and extraordinary conversation about education, wealth and politics....the difficult dilemmas regarding personal choices and political idealism. CT lets on that he's bought a flat in Notting Hill where he is based during the week. This makes a lot of sense from a travelling point of view and in being able to concentrate on work - especially with the kids at home. To bed at 1.30am. Renata is great fun with a very quick mind. The combination of a very good English vocabulary but a sometimes very thick German accent can be quite comical at times.

Day Fourteen : Friday 20 June

Absolutely awful weather again. BB thankfully returned to the camp site as opposed to going straight to Westmoorgate. We caught up on things which was fine. Camarthen was okay it seemed. It was good to hear BB be sympathetic to their situation - a small college doing their best with very little by way of resources. We had a bit of a talk about my research proposal and BB seemed quite interested although was a bit wary about the scale of it and suggested that the research plan probably needed to be quite clearly and carefully designed. Wise counsel I thought. After a bit of organising BB had arranged for two cars - mine and Eric's jeep to take a group down to West Penwith to see something of the "A Quality of Light" art event. We were to head for two exhibitions in particular, one at Botallack and the other at Geevor tin mine.

Left for West Penwith with Angus, Fay and BB. Discovered that Fay was an assistant to Honor Thackray (orchestral manager) at the Opera House. Arrived at West Penwith in glorious sunlight. We went to the show by David Kemp at the Count House, Botallack. The location was spectacular - one the cliffs among old mine workings. His show was very entertaining, inventive and referenced many aspects of archaeological and museum practice. Then to Geevor tin mine at Pendeen. An installation by Glen Onwin occupied one of the huge abandoned sheds which clung onto the slope which fell down to the sea. Large vats of mineral coloured water (red, white, black, brown) sat quietly in the disused building. We stared down on the scene with only the wind battering across the tin roof. It was an ambiguous work although very ambitious in its scale and character. Memorable. Went to souvenir shop where I bought a book on the Cornish Fougous by Ian Mcneil Cooke. After Pendeen we went back to The Star Inn at St Just for a drink. BB, Tony, Mike, Eric, Fay, Angus, Gary and moi. We had a good conversation in the a little room off the bar. I actually spoke to Eric for the first time. An interesting man with an interesting past. After this we headed back to Penzance via the Madron road and stopped off quickly at Lanyon Quoit. Then to Tesco's at Penzance for petrol and shopping. We arrived back at the camp site at 9.00pm. Supper for BB, CT, Henry, Christel and moi was beef korma with lentil sauce and broccoli followed by fruit salad and cream. BB did the washing up. Sue came around looking a little won and tired. We were all a little apprehensive about the day to follow, lots of visitors and bad weather. We'll see. To bed by 12.45am.

Day Fifteen : Saturday 21 June

The longest day of the year. Up at 7.45am. Raining heavily on the roof of the caravan. The weather and its forecast was not good. To Camelford for the Guardian, Saturday Times (my one grudging contribution to the Murdoch empire) and pasties. To Westmoorgate. It was appalling with the tent flattened in the wind. In a brief lull we managed to put it back up but clearly with weather like this it seemed doubtful that much work could be done today. Henrietta and Norman Quinnell and about 10 stalwarts of the North Devon Archaeological Society turned up in the wind and the driving rain. Henry did his "Broughton Tours" bit. I went across to say hello to Henrietta and Norman and then onto the survey work with BB and CT. After lunch Henrietta told a sorry tale of woe at the Continuing Education Department at Exeter. For the several years I have known her. She was suddenly beginning to look a bit old and sad - despondent even. At some stage we all crowded into the tent like sardines. There was something comforting about all being huddled together safe(ish) from whatever the weather could throw at us. Sometime after lunch Henry, BB, Christel, Tony and moi decided that we should abandon the day and start off the moor. We must have been halfway back when the weather changed and so we decided to go back. Tony was going back to Sussex from Bodmin station (courtesy of BB) so we said goodbye to him. Tony was a very friendly, straightforward and easy to be with. It was sad to see him leave the team. Christel was soaked through to the skin again as her trousers were still very ripped! Back on the hill we met up with CT and Mike Wilmore and did some more surveying. At 5.00pm we left again. Poor Henry was still doing his "Broughton Tour" for the Cornish Young Archaeologists - in the pouring rain. Back at Westmoorgate we decided to go to The Rising Sun for a quick drink before returning to the campsite. CT cooked an excellent meal in his and Sue's caravan. We were joined by Dave McOmish and Alasdair Oswald from the Royal Commission (RCHME). After more drinking and talking I finally made it back to my caravan by 1.30am.

Day Sixteen : Sunday 22 June

The weather was lousy again which, together with a hangover, made for a slow and indeterminate start. By mid-morning the light brightened and we thought we ought to make an effort to get onto the Moor especially since Dave and Al had brought the RCHME EDM. We got onto the hill at about midday. Dave and Al had sort of given up because the rain which was interfering with their technology. It was extraordinary that their "station" was about a mile away. From this they could accurately plot the features identified by the staff holder on the site. The hope was that they would be able to provide us with an accurate map which we could overlay onto the one we have been using to check for errors. Abandoning their plotting they instead decided to familiarise themselves with the hillside in readiness for a return visit later in the year. By lunch time they were ready to leave as Al had to get back all the way to Cambridge. We did some more work and had lunch at about 1.30pm. God, was I bushed. Things catching up on me. We flagged up the corridor. The sight was quite impressive. Like an alpine slalom track without the snow. One thing I've noticed this year has been the appearance of more animals on the hillside. Rabbits, horses, shrews, buzzards and other birds. We left the hill at about 4.30pm and did a good deed (I hope) by reporting to one of the farmers that there was a lame horse on the Moor. We were back at the campsite at about 6.00pm and shortly afterwards Gill arrived with Jim. Jim wasn't looking too brilliant; a bit pallid. He said that he had a migraine and felt queasy all week. He left quickly not feeling very well and ready to be sick. Gill followed him out and back to his car. We all (CT, BB, Gill and moi) had supper in Henry and Christel's caravan. Pasta and cheese. Henry seemed to be in a bit of a picky mood so I didn't hang around. It takes two to tango and I was tired also. It was good to see Gill and I'm glad that she could get her

Leskernick fix this year. Back at the caravan I read through the proof of the adult ed programme which Richard had sent me. Bed at 1.00am.

Day Seventeen : Monday 23 June

CT was quite insistent that we should get onto the site early so we set off via the pasty shop at 8.30am sharp. We arrived on the hillside at 9.45am - which is probably the earliest we have ever made it! Near to Westmoorgate CT picked up a worked piece of flint. (SH thought it was Beaker) His chance find is interesting because last night CT said that at Cambridge he was more interested in David Clarke's lectures than artefacts. Maybe the Moor was trying to say something to him. I think quietly CT was quite pleased with himself as he said that he has never found anything before.

The general weather forecast was not good. It was quite chilly and trying to rain. The intermittent drizzle made it impossible to draw so I decided to help the others mark-up and plot possible features in the corridor. The whole process is quite interesting and we seemed able to identify all sorts of discrete features. The exchange of views about classification are occasionally hilarious as we try to come up with words and abbreviations for the various things we are seeing. I plot the locations on the plan whilst BB sees to the narrative descriptions. We leave cold and tired at about 4.30pm after CT has demonstrated his "Rough Tor" effect, again.

BB does some shopping and I cook my potatoes, onions, carrot, garlic and cheese bake. BB devised a delicious banana, ice cream and maple syrup dessert. Dinner was for six - Mike Wilmore, Gary, Helen, Gill, BB and moi. It was a lovely evening. BB did the washing up and Gill completed a questionnaire for Mike. He shows us his questionnaire which seemed symbolically important for him and was interesting. A reciprocal act of trust. Bed by midnight.

Day Eighteen : Tuesday 24 June

This promised to be the best day yet in terms of weather. I decide to take my camera onto the hill. Gill and I drive to Westmoorgate. We get to Leskernick after BB and Fay but before CT, Christel, Henry and Mike. Gill goes up to House 39 to work and I go around to do House 1. Only Houses 2,3 and 5 to do by the end of the week. Met up with Peter Herring working in the Western Settlement. Stopped and had a chat about our recording techniques. He seems a bit concerned that much of what we are looking at is the result of transhumance. I thought transhumance was something they practised in the Alps - in extreme conditions where the most has to be made of every opportunity. Although the Moor looks extreme now I wonder whether it was considered "wild country" in earlier times. We talk briefly about West Penwith and he tells me that the CAU is planning to produce a survey volume on the area similar to that produced for Bodmin Moor. He said that he had written two chapters in 1992 but that it seems to be going nowhere at the moment. Don't hold your breath was the message. He also said that there was an important job to be done in revisiting even well-known areas and testing traditional classifications. He acknowledged the influence of CT on his approach to work. I tried to telephone Richard at work. The only good place for a signal is up next to The Quoit. It seems strangely incongruous as I sit on a stone which could have been significant for say 4000 years and talk to a colleague a hundred miles away using a technology which I do not fully understand. Similarly, I don't understand the stone or the archaeology all around me. It is an existential moment and very disconcerting at that! BB and Peter Herring walk past as I talk to Richard. Their looks could be read as disapproving but it was hard to say.

Lunch at House 28 as usual. It is strange that I usually sit in the lower (S.E.) part of the House - slightly apart from everyone else. This isn't planned or anything - just where I like to

be. SH comes over and she tells me of her passion for France (especially Paris). We also talk about Mount Cabon in Sussex and the exciting invitation she has received to dig at Vix. Sue eats like a squirrel. Her fingers picking at little pieces of food drawn out from a tiny Tupperware. It is all very precious and Zen-like. Not surprising she's so petite! After lunch we go up to House 23 to Mike Seager-Thomas who says farewell to his trench by ceremonially placing his copy of Bourdieu's "Outline of a Theory of Practice" in the bottom. SH picks the book up only to discover it was all wet. Mike had pissed on it. CT came up and decided to neutralise Mike's gesture by burying his towel alongside. Here were the two faces of modern archaeology being sealed together forever. I photograph the event. A small cairn is constructed over the artefacts by Mike and Chris before the serious back-filling starts. I think that Mike was slightly caught off guard by CT's quick response. There was even some comment from him, Dan and Angus about the wasting of a good trowel. I said something similar in respect of wasting a good book.

After this bit of drama I go over to House 1 and continue working. It was going very slowly as the building is very big and the drawing frames are beginning to fall apart. It is amusing to think that CT's "empiricist" frames are breaking up - their joints separating and the angles not sound or true. A lot of time is wasted getting them back to square each time they are moved. I finally finish it at about 6.00pm and return to the tent where the team are having a drink. There's a really good conversation going on about the landscape, art and the post-modern experience. The wrapping of the Shrine Stone near House 28 is really impressive. I tell the others about my idea of transforming the House plans into fine art prints. Their response was encouraging. Gill and I leave before the others in order to get back to the campsite by 7.30pm.

We get back at 7.35pm and have to drive through a brass band concert which is taking place outside the bar. Bizarre. Jim isn't around but then arrives about 7.40pm in an awful strop. This really upsets Gill and they leave abruptly. Supper is chips, sausages and eggs and a bottle of wine. Watch TV - "Eastenders" and a part of a programme about the middle classes. BB returns at 10.10pm having had supper at The Rising Sun pub.

Day Nineteen : Tuesday 25 June

The weather forecast is not good again. We set off stopping off at Camelford for a new plug for the sink. (The old was must have been thrown away with the rubbish!) I drive via the long mound near the Littlemoor pumping station. It started to rain very heavily when we arrived at Westmoorgate. Brown Willy was black - it is amazing how the light changes the colour of the hills. After spending about half an hour sheltering in the tent I finally get out and over to House 1 where I need to do the elevation drawing. Mike Wilmore gives me a hand. After this I go over to House 2. The pressure is now on. I feel we have lost so much time from the poor weather that it is best to work through lunch whilst the skies hold. While I am drawing I look up and see a harrier chase a sky lark. It was a determined chase which finally went out of view. I finish drawing House 3 at about 3.00pm and then move over to House 5. It seems strange today. People are working close by but nobody comes up to even say hello. It is as if we all know that the end of our time on the hill is soon and there is a need to finish the job we started nearly three weeks ago. I get halfway through House 5 and the rain really sets in.

Henry wanted to go to Bodmin to get some food so we head off to Safeways. Henry buys the meat and I get the wine. We somehow organise the meal in the Helen, Gary's and Mike's caravan. I cook the potatoes, cheese and onion bake. BB cuts the potatoes and her finger. Unexpectedly, Dave Hooley and Jenni (his partner) arrive which throws BB's timings and plans for the evening awry. At 9.00pm Henry comes and calls us over. It is an excellent meal. Whilst we were drinking and talking I see Henry pull a face behind my back to Gary.

This pisses me off and I leave. It is 10.15pm. BB hasn't returned from her summit conference with CT and SH.

Day Twenty : Thursday 26 June

There is a terrible gale and heavy rain. Really bad. The excavation team went off in appalling conditions whilst the survey team did the sensible thing and laid low in the caravan. There was some discussion about the culture, role and attitude of the two teams. We also talked about next year and about extending the survey out from Leskernick to other settlements. Late in the morning we set off to The Rising Sun pub. Called in at Camelford for pasties and Mars bars for Mike Wilmore to take up to the diggers. I also made him a large flask of coffee for him to take up.

We got to the pub. BB went with Mike to Westmoorgate and then returned. Lunch in the pub was okay but nothing special. Sausage and chips. CT, Henry, Christel and I go off to a cheese factory near Dave Hooley's place at Upton Cross near Minions. A disappointment really as we arrived just before closing at 4.00pm. Bought some Yarg cheese and another coated in back peppercorns. What were we doing? Suddenly acting like tourists in Cornwall! We then go off to Fowey which was charming. I somehow slept in the back of the car for most of the journey. We crowded into a second-hand bookshop and I bought a couple of books on the archaeology of Cornwall. We wandered around the streets with Christel taking photos of "the three boys". One of our wanderings I spoke to Henry about last night and told him how pissed off I was. He said that he really didn't want to hear another conversation about the bloody Mesolithic again. I said that was fine so he should have told me to shut up. I made the point that friendship was based on trust and honesty and that friends should be able to say what they think to each other. It was good to get things out into the open and sorted. We ended up - predictably - in a pub.

Back at camp I cooked beef curry and chips for BB and moi. Watched "This Life". We had a good discussion about art and how this might feature in the project. We talked about funding and the possibility of help from South West Arts. I suggested that next year (1998) I would like to try and make a ring of fire up at The Quoit. We talked about the involvement of the Devon River Poets, an Internet artist and the making of pots by Fay's boyfriend. Possibilities of community talks and publication. It was interesting to talk about how the publication could become something quite extraordinary - multi-layered and kaleidoscopic. Somehow the conversation got onto people in archaeology which was very interesting.

In bed writing this diary I begin to feel a winding down of the project. Although our work is not yet finished our minds are already turning to next year.

Day Twenty-one : Friday 27 June

Rain and wind again. Up at 8.00am. The troops set off to backfill trench in House 39. We mooch around. CT and Henry go off at 9.30am to take Christel to Bodmin Parkway station. Sweet farewells. BB and I take our respective cars to Westmoorgate. We walk up onto the Moor together. I need to finish off House 5 and we need to the help others pack up. With BB's help I complete the plan of House 5 which gives me feelings of real achievement. We hide the drawing frames and pegs under the "mini-tor" so that we can come back and finish off the elevation drawing in a few weeks. (*Sue subsequently finds these and brings them down off the Moor!*) Lunch is pasties and I sit and have a chat with Dan. After lunch we all work to bring everything off the hillside in readiness for the Land Rover pick-up. The painted cling-film is removed from the rocks. The back-filling of House 39 is really messy - hardly surprising in the circumstances. We walk off the site at 2.00pm. I leave via The Rising Sun but return back to the campsite by myself. At the caravan BB is reading her Guardian. We talk, read and then I have a sleep. Jan arrives and BB and I cook. It is a great meal. CT

arrives late having fallen asleep. We decide to go off to the pub. CT lets slip that he is being made a professor. Afterwards we go to CT's caravan - CT, Henry, Angus and moi. It turns out that Angus is an Egyptologist! He tells me about Egypt (going there on holiday in September) and the do's and don'ts. Angus said he wanted to come back next year. We all got a bit drunk - surprise surprise. Sue goes off to bed at a decent time with a hot water bottle. I get to my bed at 2.00am.

Day Twenty-two : Saturday 28 June

Eventually stir and get up. Much tidying and sorting out to be done. We sort of recover and redistribute most of the glasses, crockery, cutlery, pans and other utensils. Little shows as to what might have been happening here in the past three weeks. After loading the car it was time to say goodbye to everyone. Hugs all around.

Driving back was difficult. I was absolutely shattered and needed to stop and have a sleep in a lay-by. After so much stimulation the monotony of the main road was soporific. Got back to Toller Whelme. What joy to see my own bed. It took a while to empty the car and even longer to completely unpack but it was good to be back.

Post Script: *On reflection it is extraordinary how important the weather became. Throughout the three weeks there seems to be only a few really good days. Not only did the weather affect the practical aspect of drawing but also the psychology of everyone.*

In writing up this diary I am surprised how I survived the huge amounts of alcohol consumed and the general lack of sleep. I am resolved that next year must be different and I more self-disciplined!

Another observation is how important the act of cooking became. I enjoyed doing this enormously and in some ways it became an everyday ritual as was the purchase of pasties and The Guardian each morning.

Bringing my research stuff along was a complete waste of time. Days (and evenings) were too tiring...and social for any quality time to taken on other things.